

## Time & Distance Exception Request Process FAQ - June 2024

| Question   | Response   |
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| How are geographic designations accounted for in the exceptions process?   | OHA conducts its time and distance analysis by calculating a single overall compliance percentage to compare to the 95% population threshold for each provider type in rule. Based on that methodology, CCOs should submit a single proposed population threshold that is not directly connected to a particular geographic designation. CCOs may find that network challenges contained within a specific region in the service area are disproportionately impacting the CCO's ability to meet the 95% compliance threshold. CCOs may find it helpful to conduct their own time and distance analyses based on distinct regions within their service area to help identify those issues. OHA reviewers will review that information as part of the "Current Access" section of the exception request form. CCOs may also find it necessary to address these sub-regional differences throughout other sections of the exceptions request form.   |
| What will OHA reviewers be looking for in regard to a root cause analysis? | OHA reviewers will be looking for evidence of a comprehensive root cause analysis with input and contributions from appropriate bodies (e.g. quality improvement committee, network adequacy committee, CCO provider relations). OHA does not require the use of particular root cause analysis tools; however, a comprehensive analysis will likely necessitate the use of one or more tools. CCOs may find it useful to refer to the <a href="#">American Society for Quality – Cause Analysis Resources</a> webpage and the <a href="#">Institute for Healthcare Improvement's Quality Improvement Essential Toolkit</a> for more information regarding tools and processes helpful to complete the analysis. CCOs may also find the steps outlined in the guidance document prepared by CMS, " <a href="#">Guidance for Performing Root Cause Analysis (RCA) with Performance Improvement Projects (PIPs)</a> " useful during this process. OHA staff are available to provide technical assistance regarding the root cause analysis process.<br><br>OHA recognizes the impact of workforce shortages on network adequacy, however when reviewing exception requests, OHA expects to see a deeper level of analysis regarding shortages, including where the CCO has an impact or ability to influence outcomes, given the particulars of the service area and provider type. |

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| What will the renewal process look like for exceptions?   | <p>CCOs will be required to resubmit exception requests at least annually (more frequently if OHA approved the exception for a shorter time period). The renewal request must be received at least 90 days in advance of the Provider Capacity Report submission deadline to be considered for that submission's time and distance analysis (i.e. requests must be received by February 15<sup>th</sup> for the May 15<sup>th</sup> Capacity Report submission or by August 16<sup>th</sup> for the November 14<sup>th</sup> Capacity Report submission). For example, if the CCO's initial exception request was submitted and approved ahead of the May Capacity Report submission, the renewal request must be submitted ahead of the May Capacity Report submission the following year in order to maintain the exception. The renewal process will be very similar to the original exception process however will place greater emphasis on documented progress the CCO has made in relation to the stated short term and long-term strategies and interventions described in its original exception request submission. CCOs will be expected to revisit the initial root cause analysis to determine if there are any necessary updates to be made that would impact the CCO's strategies to address the underlying network issues. OHA will provide additional guidance regarding resubmissions later in 2024.</p> |
| What happens if a CCO does not submit an exception request and is not compliant with an OHA-conducted time and distance analysis? | <p>OHA will reach out to the CCO to discuss the situation and will work with the CCO to develop an improvement plan. It is likely that the improvement plan expectations would align with the expectations set forth in the exceptions request form and process.</p>   |
| What kind of documentation, in addition to the form itself, does OHA expect to receive?   | <p>OHA expects that CCOs will likely need to submit the following types of documents to fully demonstrate that all elements of the exception request are complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting minutes (e.g. network committee) demonstrating discussion of network issue</li> <li>• Documentation of the analysis (e.g. one-pagers, memos, dashboard screenshots, data summaries, etc.)</li> <li>• Completed root cause analysis tool(s)</li> <li>• Project plan(s)</li> </ul> <p>This is not an exhaustive list. If a CCO has further questions about what documentation would best support their exception request, they are highly encouraged to seek</p>   |

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|   | technical assistance from the CCO QA Team ( <a href="mailto:HSD.QualityAssurance@odhsoha.oregon.gov">HSD.QualityAssurance@odhsoha.oregon.gov</a> ).  |
| How does OHA propose that CCOs identify an alternate percentage threshold for compliance? | OHA does not endorse a single methodology by which CCOs arrive at an alternate proposed percentage threshold for compliance. OHA will review to ensure that any proposed percentage threshold for compliance was derived through a data-driven process that includes analysis of member and provider location data and consideration of member needs, utilization, and demographics. .   |
| What framework/rubric will OHA reviewers apply to the review?                             | <p>Met/Approved = The exception is justified. The submission (documentation and narrative) addresses all required components across all sections and the submission includes clear evidence of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The exception request was reviewed and approved internally in accordance with CCO network activity processes and infrastructure.</li> <li>2. The CCO process to develop the exception request is data-driven/data-informed (quantitative and qualitative, as appropriate).</li> </ol> <p>Not Met/Not Approved = The exception is not justified. The submission (documentation and narrative) does not address all required components across all sections nor does the submission include clear evidence of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The exception request was reviewed and approved internally in accordance with CCO network activity processes and infrastructure.</li> <li>2. The CCO process to develop the exception request is data-driven/data-informed (quantitative and qualitative, as appropriate).</li> </ol> <p>Additional evaluation criteria will be posted to the CCO Contract Forms webpage.</p> |
| Could this be used to receive a variance on other standards or programs?                  | At this time, the form and process only apply to the time and distance standards described in OAR 410-141-3515.  |